

DPH Advises Delaware Residents of Multi-State Salmonella Outbreak Involving Turkey Products

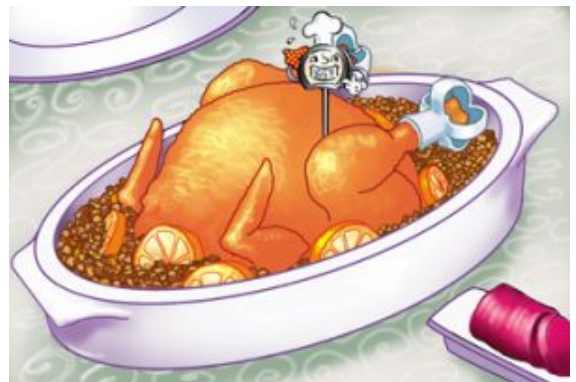


Image credit: FDA.
Thermometer in cooked turkey

DOVER – The Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) is advising Delawareans of a multi-state outbreak of Salmonella Reading infections linked to raw turkey products. According to the CDC, 164 people infected with the outbreak strain of Salmonella Reading have been reported in 35 states, including one person in Delaware. Of the cases reported nationally, 63 people have been hospitalized. No Delawareans have been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported from Delaware. One death was reported from California.

The CDC says the outbreak strain has been identified in samples taken from raw turkey pet food, raw turkey products and live turkeys. Of the 85 people interviewed, 44 (52 percent) reported preparing or eating turkey products that were purchased raw, including ground turkey, turkey pieces and

whole turkey. People who were ill reported buying many different brands of raw turkey products from multiple stores. Additionally, three of the 85 people who were interviewed said they became sick after pets in their home ate raw ground turkey pet food. Another three people interviewed worked in a facility that raises or processes turkeys, or lived with someone who did.

A single, common supplier of raw turkey products or of live turkeys has not been identified. As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday period, the CDC is not advising consumers to avoid eating properly cooked turkey, and is not advising retailers to stop selling raw turkey products. However, individuals should follow these steps to help prevent Salmonella infection from raw turkey:

- Always handle raw turkey carefully and cook it thoroughly to prevent food poisoning. This outbreak is a reminder that raw turkey can have germs that spread around food preparation areas and will make you sick.
- Wash your hands. Salmonella infections can spread from one person to another if hands have Salmonella germs on them. Wash hands before and after preparing or eating food, after contact with animals, and after using the restroom or changing diapers.
- Cook raw turkey thoroughly to kill harmful germs. Turkey breasts, whole turkeys, and ground poultry, including turkey burgers, casseroles, and sausage, should always be cooked to an internal temperature of 165°F to kill harmful germs. Leftovers should be reheated to 165°F. Use a food thermometer to check, and place it in the thickest part of the food.
- Don't spread germs from raw turkey around food preparation areas. Washing raw poultry before cooking is not recommended. Germs in raw poultry juices can spread to other areas and foods. Thoroughly wash hands, counters, cutting boards, and utensils with warm, soapy

water after they are touched by raw turkey. Use a separate cutting board for raw turkey and other raw meats if possible.

- CDC does not recommend feeding raw diets to pets. Germs like Salmonella in raw pet food can make your pets sick. Your family also can get sick by handling the raw food or by taking care of your pet.
- Thaw turkey (<https://www.cdc.gov/features/turkeytime/index.html>) in the refrigerator, in a sink of cold water that is changed every 30 minutes, or in the microwave. Never thaw your turkey by leaving it out on the counter.

Most people with Salmonella infections develop diarrhea, fever and stomach cramps 12 to 72 hours after being exposed to the bacteria. The illness usually lasts four to seven days, and most people recover without treatment. Children younger than 5, adults older than 65, and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to have severe illness.

People who experience these symptoms should seek medical attention.

For more information about this outbreak, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/reading-07-18/index.html> . For more information about preventing Salmonella infection, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/general/prevention.html>.

A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled can call the DPH phone number above by using TTY services. Dial 7-1-1 or 800-232-5460 to type your conversation to a relay operator, who reads your conversation to a hearing person at DPH. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words back to the TTY user. To learn more about TTY availability in Delaware, visit <http://delawarerelay.com>.

The Department of Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by

promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.